



Maine Farmer.

HOMAN & BADGER, Publishers.

S. L. BOARDMAN, Agricultural Editor.

Our Home, our Country and our Brother Man.

Forthcoming Meetings.

MAINE STATE FARMERS' SOCIETY: Meeting for the reading of papers and discussion, with a Winter Exhibition of Fruits, Grains and Cattle, on Saturday, January 19th, at 10 o'clock, at the State House, Augusta, Maine.

MAINE POLITY ASSOCIATION: Annual meeting at Augusta, at Agricultural Room, State House, Tuesday, Jan. 20th.

MAINE STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY: Annual meeting at Agricultural Room, State House, Wednesday, Jan. 21st.

A Call.

All who are interested in Agriculture in any of its branches, are invited to meet at the time and place of the annual meeting of the Board of Agriculture, for the purpose of electing a new Board, and discussing the various subjects connected with the improvement of our agriculture.

J. W. LANGR, S. L. BOARDMAN, DANIEL SPOONER.

Our Old Pastures.

Few practical subjects are of more importance to the farmer than the renovation of old pastures. And although in some sections of the country considerable attention is being given to the subject, the farmers of Maine are not yet sufficiently awake to its importance. They have yet made much effort for the direct improvement of their old and exhausted pasture lands. It is however a branch of farming that, like good husbandry, has been neglected too long, and it is now high time that neglected pastures received some care.

One great mania of the early settlers of the country was to cut down trees. They interfered with cultivation, they obstructed the view, they kept out the sun. So the sharp axe did its work, and we are to-day mourning the loss of our rough hill-sides, unfit for anything but the growth of forests, which it will take generations to replace, were stripped of their original growth to form pastures where our early farmers might graze their cattle. For fifty years they have been grazed for fifty years, and in many cases very rocky, full of cradle knolls, covered with moss and growing up with bushes, brakes and useless weeds. What are such pastures good for but to be left to themselves and grow up into trees, that they may furnish timber and fuel for succeeding owners? The sooner they are cut apart for such service, the better it will be for our farming, and the greater will be the benefit that the present will confer upon coming generations.

Something has been done, and much it is true may be done in the renovation of pastures that have been long grazed, by cutting out the bushes, by sowing on plaster, by pasturing with sheep, and other like means. But if efforts of this kind are spent upon an old pasture so rough and rocky it cannot be plowed, they had better be put forth in other directions. Pastures that cannot be plowed and reseeded must certainly be left to grow up into trees, unless it be the grazing of sheep.

For many years the opinion was most vigorously maintained that pastures should never be plowed, for if the sward was once broken it would never again become so compact as to form a good grazing turf. But this opinion has been found incorrect. Pastures may be broken, plowed to pasture, the fall the potatoes are harvested, and the next spring sown to barley and seeded down to a good mixture of grasses well adapted to grazing, and a good sward at once obtained and maintained for many years. The grasses in our old pastures are chiefly wild grasses, and have found their way in by accident rather than design. In re-seeding a pasture it is very important to have a large quantity of seeds of those varieties of grasses that are most productive at different periods, and that are well adapted to grazing. The following mixture has been recommended: Meadow fescue, 2 lbs.; orchard grass, 6 lbs.; sweet-stemmed fescue, 1 lb.; meadow fescue, 2 lbs.; red-top, 2 lbs.; Kentucky blue grass, 4 lbs.; Italian ryegrass, 4 lbs.; perennial ryegrass, 6 lbs.; timothy, 3 lbs.; rough stalked meadow grass, 2 lbs.; perennial clover, 3 lbs.; white clover, 5 lbs.—or a total of 40 pounds per acre per bushel. This would give the enormous number of 54,000 seeds, or eight seeds to every square inch on ground. Who doubts that this would, in a favorable season, produce a good thick permanent sward—and that cattle would graze from it in preference to the bound out turf of the old pasture?

With the extension of dairy husbandry in our State, there is a more and more attention to the pastures and of more attention to the plowing and re-stocking of our grazing lands. Cold, coarse grasses will keep animals alive, and may possibly make beef—but nutritious grasses are needed for the production of milk. And from the fact that cows yield milk, pastures fed wholly or chiefly by other animals. It is necessary therefore that our farmers give more attention to the subject, and that in their clubs and assemblies this winter, they discuss the best methods of improving, renovating or re-seeding their pasture lands; and be ready the coming season to put the same into practical execution.

The Open Winter.

This is the open winter—the uncovered ground, and the fields remain open to the sun. In the streets we hear not the rattle of wheels, nor the sound of the plow, but the sound of the hoe, and the sound of the scythe. The morning sun pushes its rays through thick mists in the eastern sky, and all day the air is heavy with fog. The meadowlands are full of ice, and the fields are covered with a thin layer of snow. The cattle are kept in the barn, and the sheep are kept in the pen. The farmer is busy with his work, and the day is long and cold.

This is the open winter—the clear running river, and the gurgle of waters by roadside. In the old days, when our grandfathers were young, even remarkable—the ice went out in mid-winter, and the wooden plow turned the fresh furrow in January. Behold the open river, and the steaming fields ready for seed, in "days degenerate!" Let the oxen and sheep and horses graze on the green, and lift lighter forklifts of hay, that none be wasted. In warmth, the sluggish appetite is dull, and with the vigor of cold the system demands more food. The woman will study both the weather and season. This is the open winter—but after the "spell" is broken, and the cold and bells will come again, for is there not a winter and full of wisdom, that "winter never runs in the sky?"

The Fuller's Thistle, or Toxale.

The invention of man has sought out many contrivances, and it is quite wonderful to see the many operations in the arts that were formerly performed only by cunning fingers, now performed by machinery which is carried with the perfection of clock work, and which does its work with an accuracy unsurpassed by hands guided by human intelligence. Fingers have been made that feed printing presses, that pick up shoe pegs, that put metallic eyes into shoes, and that do a hundred other things a thousand times faster than human hands could do them. But there are certain processes that no machine can perform, there are important operations in the arts upon which the inventive genius of man has made no improvement. With all his skill in the creation of chemical dyes, nothing has yet been found to take the place of indigo, in coloring blue; and for that particular finish upon woolen cloth known as "raising the nap," no invention has yet been found to take the place of the teazle or fuller's thistle, the rippled head or fruit of a plant known to the botanist as *Dipsacus fullonica*. This plant is remarkable for producing at the end of the little leaves at the base of its flowers, called bracts, a spine which curves downwards, and this acts as a kind of hook brush for pulling up loose particles of cloth. It is just sufficient to raise the nap, but too yielding to tear the cloth. Various substitutes for the teazle have been tried but all to no purpose. Formerly, these thistles were held in the hands of workmen and pulled across the web of cloth, suspended on a frame before them—now they are attached to a cylinder which revolves upon the cloth, and the loose particles are raised so they may be easily sheared or cut off to give the goods the fine appearance it assumes after this process is completed. The plant is a native of the south of Europe, the Levant, and the Cape of Good Hope, but has become naturalized in this country and grows in the fields, gardens, ditches, and orchards, and of domestic manufacturers and ladies' handiwork. There was the best of field among all those to whom were awarded premiums best satisfied, and those who were not so fortunate went home determined to do better next year.

Forgotten Fairs.

ETNA FARMERS' CLUB.

A letter just received from Ellis Friend, Esq., President of the Etna Farmers' Club, calling our attention to the fact that sometimes the club has been held in the past, to defer the publication in this paper, for when to our astonishment, we found we had not only done injustice, ignorantly, to this organization, but a similar one from whom no complaint had been received, and which all this time has been being "left out in the cold" with a patience truly commendable. For, in an unforgotten corner, we found among some overlooked and forgotten matters marked "on file for publication," not only the account of the Etna Farmers' Club fair, but that of the Prospect and Stockfarmers' Club! The interest in these exhibitions having somewhat subsided, we deem it best, while making an apology to our friends for having neglected to publish, to defer their publication in full, alluding to a few general facts of interest.

The exhibition at Etna was the second one held by the Farmers' and Mechanics' Club of that town. The attendance was good, and the grounds assigned to the stock "presented the appearance of a farm yard on a large scale," while the hall was well filled with the specimens of products of the fields, garden, dairy, and orchard, and of domestic manufacturers and ladies' handiwork. There was the best of field among all those to whom were awarded premiums best satisfied, and those who were not so fortunate went home determined to do better next year.

Prospect and Stockfarmers' Club.

This club held its fourth annual exhibition at Prospect village, Sept. 20th, the attendance being very large and the stock all of excellent quality. The following synopsis of the premiums awarded will show at a glance the large number of competitors and the general interest manifested by the farmers of those towns in the exhibition. Horses, of all classes, eleven first, and six second premiums; cattle, sixteen first, and twelve second premiums; a full blood Short-horn bull was shown by Adeline Crockett of Stockton, and a thoroughbred Jersey bull by Freeman Partridge; sheep, forty-one premiums; hogs, ten premiums; manufactured articles, twenty-two premiums; besides nearly thirty gratuities and commendatory mentions in the several classes. The officers of the club are now as follows: President, S. S. Trevelick; Vice Presidents, J. M. Willard, N. W. Staples, L. H. Clifford, Edward Partridge; Secretary, Adeline Crockett; Treasurer, Freeman Partridge; Librarian, G. W. Crockett. The Club has sixty-two members, and is in good working order. Success to all its fairs.

The Results of Good Breeding.

Sometimes when we get in our columns a full account of the great sale of Short-horns, which took place at New York Mills, N. Y., in September last, at which one hundred and ninety animals realized the almost marvellous price of \$381,900 or an average of \$3,819.50 each. Of the breeders' sale six animals purchased by English breeders fetched \$14,100 or an average of \$2,350 each; and six purchased by the State of England, who had purchased largely of the Collings animals, several were brought to this country by Col. L. G. Morris of Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

We give in the accompanying illustration, a most satisfactory portrait of the 1st Duchess of Devonshire, who at this sale was purchased by Lord Skelmersdale, of England for the enormous price of \$30,000! The great interest in the sale of the Collings animals, several were brought to this country by Col. L. G. Morris of Mt. Vernon, N. Y. The very fine engraving published in this number of the FARMER, is a copy of one of Page's excellent animal portraits engraved on stone, and while being an accurate portrait of this famous heifer, it is most certainly a representation of the breed of cattle to which she belongs—showing that symmetry and beauty for which the well bred Short-horns are so celebrated.

Elevation of Western Territories.

The reports of Prof. F. V. Hayden U. S. Geological Survey, on the geology of the Western territories, are publications of great value, and embrace an abundance of interesting facts regarding the wonderful physical characteristics of the yet little known regions comprising the territories of Colorado, Idaho, Wyoming, Montana and Utah. The wonders of the Yellowstone Valley, and the celebrated volcanic region of which it is the center, are all over the world, are but single instances of the great scientific interest attaching to the localities, give full and graphic details.

Recently we have been much interested in examining a little pamphlet issued by this department giving the elevations of some of the chief points West of the Mississippi river. To show their comparative range with elevations East, we will take Mt. Washington as the standard, which has an elevation of 6,438 feet above the level of the sea. In the southern part of British America, the several passes across the Rocky Mountains are as follows: 5,985 feet, 5,800 feet, 6,325 feet and 6,275 feet above the level of the sea. The Union Pacific Railroad crosses the water shed at Creston, at an elevation of 7,000 feet, and there are six hundred feet above the summit of Mt. Washington. The culminating point is reached in Colorado where the passes have an elevation of from 11,000 to 13,000 feet—the summit being nearly 15,000 feet above the level of the sea. Mt. Katahdin, the highest point in Maine is but 5,300 feet high. The elevation of some of the celebrated hot springs in the Yellowstone region is from 6,275 feet to 8,290 feet—the boiling point averaging 189°. The sulphur springs between the Yellowstone and Galatin, are 8,246 feet above the level of the sea.

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